

Remarks

No new matter is added by this amendment. The present application was filed on September 12, 2003 with original claims 1-105. By this amendment, claims 1, 53 and 54 have been amended. The claims remaining in consideration are claims 1-105, of which claims 1 and 53 are independent. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-20, 31-72, and 80-105 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 6,024,641 issued to Robert A. Sarno on February 15, 2000 (“Sarno”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 53 have been amended to more clearly identify the subject matter applicants regard as their invention.

Sarno discloses a method, apparatus, and system for playing and verifying the results of a lottery, lottery-type, or other game played by end-users who are remotely located. One of the problems at which the Sarno system is aimed arises from the use of providing access to games at remote locations though wide area networks, the internet or World Wide Web. Sarno describes the problem as:

it is virtually impossible to assure players the virtual casino game is fair and has not been “virtually” manipulated or fixed in some manner. (Column 1, lines 59-63.

Through use of a wide area network or the Internet, the Sarno system allows the “user” to register and to make selections (such as lottery numbers) in order to play the game.

The present invention, as embodied in amended claim 1, sets forth a remote system for use with a gaming system. The gaming system has at least one gaming machine. The gaming machine has a hopper for issuing credits to a player (tokens or coins). A host computer is coupled to the at least one gaming machine by a network. The host computer includes a database for maintaining hopper fill information relating to the at least one gaming machine. The remote system includes a remote device and a remote network interface. The remote device receives data and is embodied in a mobile computer which may be carried by a user. The remote network interface is coupled to the remote device for exchanging data between the host computer and the remote device. The data includes a hopper fill alert sent to the remote device indicating the hopper on

one of the gaming machines needs to be restocked and an acknowledgement sent to the host computer from the remote device in response to input from the user.

In other words, the remote device is a device which is carried around by the user. When the level of credits, e.g., tokens or coins, in the hopper of one the gaming machines gets too low, the host computer sends an alert signal to the remote device indicating that the hopper needs to be filled. The user sees the alert and acknowledges the alert using the remote device so that the user can then go fill the hopper.

Amended independent claim 53 sets forth a method for processing a hopper fill for use with a gaming system. The gaming system has at least one gaming machine with a hopper for issuing credits to a player. The method includes the step of providing a remote device. The remote device is embodied in a mobile computer which may be carried by a user. The method further includes the step of exchanging data between a host computer and the remote device. The data includes a hopper fill alert sent to the remote device indicating the hopper on one of the gaming machines needs to be restocked and an acknowledgement sent to the host computer from the remote device in response to input from the user.

Sarno does not include each and every element of amended independent claims 1 and 53. Specifically, Sarno does not include a remote device which is carried by a user which receives an alert from a host computer that a hopper on a gaming machine needs to be filled nor allows the user to acknowledge the alert.

Since Sarno does not include each and every element of amended independent claims 1 and 53, applicants respectfully assert that the 102(b) rejection is improper and must be withdrawn.

Claims 2-20, 31-52, 54-72, and 80-105 are ultimately dependent upon allowable claim 1 or 53. Therefore, for the reasons set forth above and based on their own merits, applicants respectfully assert that claims 2-20, 31-52, 54-72, and 80-105.

Claims 21-30 and 73-79 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sarno in view of Database Management System, 1998, McGraw Hill. ISBN 0-07-050775-9 (“Ramakrishnan”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 21-30 and 73-79 are ultimately dependent upon allowable claims 1 or 53, respectively. Ramakrishnan does not overcome the deficiencies of Sarno. Therefore, for

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the reasons set forth above, and based on their own merits, applicants respectfully assert that claims 21-30 and 73-79 are also allowable.

All of the Examiner's rejection having been successfully overcome, applicants respectfully assert that the present application is now in condition for allowance. An early Notice of Allowance is solicited. If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would be helpful, please contact the undersigned at the number provided.

Applicant believes that no fees are due, however, if any become required, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account 08-2789 in the name of Howard & Howard Attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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